



# *The Michigan Reservist*

*The Official Publication for the Reserve Organization of America  
Department of Michigan—[www.roami.org](http://www.roami.org)*

**Issue 2 – 2025**

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Ventzel J. Potochnik, Captain, United States Navy (Retired), Department President

Greetings to all in the Department of Michigan, Reserve Officers Association.

I have been chosen to serve as President, Reserve Organization of America, Department of Michigan, for the 2025 to 2027 term in the rotation as the Sea Services time to take the conn from the Army.

This my third time in the President's seat, having served 1989-90 and 2011-13. I would sincerely like to thank LTC Lou Wilson for his fine leadership these past two years. He did a magnificent job and brought new ideas to reinvigorate our organization, especially the Working Together program with the University of Michigan ROTC units. This is a chance for all of you to get more involved with future leadership of our great Armed Forces.

Membership remains around 600 out of approximately 35,000 nationwide, the finances look good and we are managing to keep the Department of Michigan up and running. Nationally, many of our sister departments are going inactive or consolidating. Consider becoming more involved in running our Department since most of our meetings are conducted online via ZOOM. Plus, the Working Together Program needs volunteers to spread the mentorship to more Michigan universities.



Ventzel J. Potochnik, Captain, US Navy (Retired)



April 26, 2025 State Conference, Russian and Chinese Arctic Incursions

As per our constitution, the annual Department of Michigan State Conference was held on 26 April 2025 at Mulligan Golf Center on board Selfridge ANGB. The theme was "Russian and Chinese Arctic Incursions" with nationally known guest speakers and an update from ROA National. Selections were held for service department vice presidents for the upcoming leadership cycle. Many opportunities exist if you have any interest in participating. The Executive Committee will take the Summer off and resume activities in September 2025.

With that, I will wrap up the first newsletter of our business year. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those going into harm's way and for our comrades that made the ultimate sacrifice. Fair winds and following seas to all.

## Department Events of Interest

**2025 Department Conference**



**2025 IAFC Dinner**



**ROTC Awards and Dinner**



**ROTC Working Group**





## ROTC / JROTC

Louis Wilson, LTC (RET), US Army, President

# Working Together Program Thrives

The new ROA & ROTC Working Together Program is something special. No other program like this exists in the State of Michigan. It provides ROTC cadets with leadership skills to help them succeed as officers; and presents officers with opportunities to share their leadership experiences with a new generation of officers and to enjoy continued involvement with old and new military friends.



MG Joe Marsiglia met with cadets in Ann Arbor to share his leadership experiences.

The idea for the Working Together Program started in April 2024. LTC (RET) Louis Wilson attended the University of Michigan Tri-Service Awards Ceremony and met cadets and cadre. The UM Army ROTC Wolverine Battalion had a new professor of military science (PMS), CPT Louis Goldstein assigned. Informal discussions sparked an idea to bring experienced officers into contact with students. If it was to succeed, the cadets had to have input and ownership of the program. Two cadets, Jonathan Li and Ethan Wilmot, volunteered as points of contact to gather cadet input. They suggested monthly meetings at a day and time that fit the students' class schedules. To allow time to organize, the first meeting was set to take place in January 2025.

LTC Wilson recruited officers to participate. He was greatly helped by BG (RET) Mark Montjar, who contacted several friends, who were also generals. An initial group of 6 generals and 6 field grade officers comprised the group. MG US Army Joseph Marsiglia and several other officers from the Army, Navy and Air Force attended in person. ROA-MI EX-COM members and Naval officers CPT Ventz Potochik and CDR Jim Semerad took part. As several of the officers lived far from Ann Arbor, they were linked to the meetings via ZOOM. The officers provided copies of their military bios. CPT Goldstein provided the UM meeting rooms, ZOOM meeting administration, and coordination with the cadets.

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ZOOM Meeting screen. Pictured in first row from left to right: MG (RET) Adolph McQueen, MG (RET) Arthur Bartell. Second row: cadets in conference room and BG (RET) Mark Montjar.

The program agendas were flexible and consisted of introductions and cadet questions. The cadets were asked to contact one or two officers outside of the meeting times, where the officers could serve as career mentors and information resources. The officers provided informal guidance and wrote reference letters for admission to civilian graduate and military programs. The ROTC curriculum provides a solid base of technical skills. The Working Together Program provides an additional level of leadership skills in working with people, real world experience, and military careers.

Many positive outcomes resulted for both the cadets and officers. The cadets gained leadership skills and created connections with officers to assist their careers. The officers enjoyed involvement with military friends and shared their experiences to develop future leaders. The ROA may benefit from increased involvement in ROA events with the retention and recruitment of ROA memberships. The program was beneficial and fun for all who participated, and may lead to long term friendships. Many of the junior and senior cadets have joined the ROA as Associate Members



CPT Louis Goldstein and LTC (RET) Louis Wilson

With the enthusiastic cadet support, CPT Goldstein and LTC (RET) Wilson are planning to offer the Working Together Program at the UM ROTC Program in Sept 2025. For more information, interested officers of all service branches can contact LTC Wilson at [louis-wilson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:louis-wilson@sbcglobal.net).

## ROA National New Executive Director

From John Hashem, Executive Director

I am thrilled to serve as the new Executive Director of ROA. When I retired in 2024 from the Army Reserve and in my last position as the Military Executive of the Secretary of Defense's Reserve Forces Policy Board, I wanted to continue to serve our reserve components (RC). ROA provides this wonderful opportunity as the premier military service organization of the RC, their members, families, and veterans. I am grateful to help lead this next chapter together.

Each one of you defines our strength. Your service, sacrifice, and continued commitment to our RC and national defense are what make ROA unique and indispensable. As I step into this role, I want to ensure our efforts reflect your priorities, concerns, and aspirations. I invite you to share your thoughts, ideas, and experiences with me. What are your most pressing issues, your families, and your fellow reserve members? How can ROA best represent and support you? Together, we will strengthen our voice, grow our community, and ensure the RC remains ready, respected, and fully integrated as an operational force while continuing to provide strategic depth for our Nation. Please reach out to me at [jhashem@ROA.org](mailto:jhashem@ROA.org).

Thank you for your service and membership! I look forward to hearing from you and working alongside you to continue building ROA's future.

John B. Hashem, Major General, USA (Ret.)

Executive Director





## Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, NOAA

Commander James Semerad, USN (Retired), Sea Services, Vice President

### Sea Services Vice President

Thank you to the many Reserve Officers and Enlisted for your support.



A short Bio: I have been a Supply Officer for the US Navy and completed a lot of work in Expeditionary Logistics (Seabees, Cargo Handling, expeditionary fuels). I also worked at the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) moving supplies around the globe. On the private side, being in the Information Technology field, I support cyber security, Artificial Intelligence, and privacy. I have 37 yrs US Navy and worked on the private side with EDS/HP/

VisionIT. Semi-retired, I focus on US Coast Guard Auxiliary (have boats) in Port Huron, defense contracts, and drones. Jim Hannigan, former US Navy Captain recommended me as a Junior Officer of the Year at ROA.



CDR James Semerad, USN (RET)



Our US Navy and sea services need your support. We currently have a US Navy presence at Selfridge ANGB and Battle Creek (Ft Custer). Navy Recruiting (Navy Talent Acquisition Group – Heartland (<https://www.cnrc.navy.mil/Heartland/>) needs you to reach out and create opportunities for them. Our NJROTC (<https://www.netc.navy.mil/NSTC/NJROTC/>) can also use your help.

ROA – Michigan Department has almost 600 members throughout the state. You could have an impact in our reserve community; Navy, Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, National Guard, Space Forces. Pick up the baton and help us, get involved. [jimsemerad@cs.com](mailto:jimsemerad@cs.com) 248-466-7525







## From the Air Force

From the Army Vice President, Louis Wilson, LTC (RET)

### Selfridge to Be Home to New F-15EX Fighter Mission

Senator Gary Peters released the following article in his email newsletter newsletter@peters.senate.gov.

As someone who had the privilege to drill at Selfridge Air National Guard Base for more than a decade in the U.S. Navy Reserve, and who has fought for years to bring a new fighter mission to the base, I am thrilled to welcome 21 brand new F-15EXs fighter jets to Selfridge. These new fighters will ensure that Selfridge – and Michigan – remain central to our national defense for decades to come.

Selfridge is located close to the world-class training venues we have in Northern Michigan and home to highly skilled pilots, crews, and maintainers. It has massive economic importance to our state, supporting nearly 30,000 jobs. Selfridge is a top-tier asset to Michigan and our entire country and the ideal location for an advanced fighter mission. That's why I've repeatedly led our state's delegation in meeting with and urging top Defense Department officials across both Democratic and Republican Administrations to replace Selfridge's A-10 mission with a new, long-term fighter mission.

I've also used my position on the Senate Appropriations Committee—the committee responsible for government spending—to push for the funding needed to make additional F-15EX fighter jets for Selfridge, and used my role on the Armed Services Committee to bring home \$28 million for a new aircraft hangar on the base that can house these fighters.

In addition to securing a new fighter mission, last year we announced that the U.S. Air Force selected Selfridge

to host a new, full squadron of 12 brand new KC-46A refueling tankers to replace our eight aging KC-135 refuelers.



Michigan has always stepped up when our country needed us, and Selfridge is the best choice to base these new, next-generation aircrafts. With the help of our partners in the state and Macomb County, I'm proud of the work we've done together to keep Selfridge at the forefront of our national defense. I'm going to continue fighting to secure the future of the base.



## From the Army President

Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army Retired, President

# Army Establishes New Fitness Test

The U.S. Army announced the establishment of the Army Fitness Test (AFT) as the official physical fitness test of record for all soldiers, replacing the Army Combat Fitness Test.

The five-event AFT, is designed to enhance Soldier fitness, improve warfighting readiness, and increase the lethality of the force. The AFT consists of the three-repetition maximum deadlift, hand-release push-up arm extension, sprint-drag-carry, plank, and two-mile run.

The events are performed in a specific order. The RAND Corporation analysis and Army data from nearly 1 million test records helped to form the new standard.

Phased implementation of the AFT will begin June 1, 2025, with new scoring standards for Soldiers in 21 combat military occupational specialties (MOSs) taking effect on January 1, 2026, for the active component and June 1, 2026, for the Army Reserve and National Guard. The test has two standards: combat and general.

The AFT combat standard is sex-neutral and age-normed. Soldiers serving in combat specialties must achieve a minimum of 60 points per event and an overall minimum score of 350. Soldiers in combat arms are required to take the AFT – Combat Standard. The AFT general standard is performance-normed by sex and age groups. Soldiers serving in combat-enabling specialties must attain a score of at least 60 points per event and an overall minimum score of 300.

The Army is also adapting its policy framework to support implementation, including support to Soldiers with medical profiles and governance to monitor the impact of the new standard on readiness, retention, and end strength.



For more information  
Scan the QR code.



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## The Michigan Reservist

Opinions expressed herein are those of the editor or columnists and are not necessarily those of the Department of Michigan or the Reserve Officers Association of the United States.

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